WORKS IN PROGRESS

VOLUME 8, NO. 7 | THURSTON COUNTY RAINBOW COALITION | NOVEMBER 1997

"'"Property' means dominion over things and the denial to others of the use of those things." Emma Goldman

The Tenants Union Needs You

The Thurston County Tenants Union

In a recent dispute, when residents of the Carpenter Cove Apartments in Lacey couldn't get their landlord to fix leaky plumbing and make other repairs, several of them resorted to a frustrated tenant's strongest gesture: they stopped paying rent. "Rent strikes" have been used very effectively at pivotal times in American history to win important rights for renters. Unfortunately some Carpenter Cove tenants lost their homes because their rent strike — however justified in their own and their supporters' eyes — was illegal under state law, and therefore the landlord was able to evict them.

The State Residential Landlord-Tenant Act (Chapter 59.18 RCW), which spells out in detail the rights and obligations of landlords and tenants, and also describes specific processes for resolving disputes, is probably not well understood by most renters. (To comply with state law, the Carpenter Cove tenants would have needed to keep paying rent while jumping through a series of legal hoops intended to force the landlord to make the repairs.)

Currently, Thurston County renters — a group that represents over a third of all county households (including roughly half the households of Olympia, Lacey and Tumwater) — can consult with a lawyer if they need help understanding landlord-tenant law. Or they can call the state Tenants Union (1-800-752-9993), a non-profit Seattle-based organization founded in 1976. The Tenants Union answers calls from approximately 15,000 renters each year, including hundreds of calls from Thurston County tenants.

Soon county tenants will have another alternative closer to home: the Thurston County Tenants Union, which is being formed in response to a need for a tenants union dedicated to our local concerns and issues. Like a labor union, a tenants union is a membership-based organization that works to protect its members' rights and interests. In some cases, tenants unions bargain with landlords over rent and housing conditions. In others, the union focuses on informing members about their legal rights and obligations and lobbying for changes in law and public policy.

The Thurston County Tenants Union needs members to help the union grow into a force for change. As a grassroots, non-partisan, direct action organization of members, we seek new members to shape our vision.

Some of the earliest tenants unions in the U.S. were begun by poor immigrants in East Coast tenements in the 1900s and 1910s, when they went on "rent strikes" for decent, safe housing and to protest steep, unpredictable increases in rent. Today, renters include some of the poorest and most vulnerable people. In Seattle, the Tenants Union has helped to win protections for tenants exceeding the ones provided in state law.

By comparison, Thurston County tenants have fewer rights

Thurston County landlords can evict tenants at will, without having to give a reason. In Seattle a "just cause" ordinance protects tenants from retaliation and discrimination by requiring landlords to show a valid reason before evicting a tenant.

In Thurston County landlords can legally refuse to rent to low-income recipients of Section 8 federal financial assistance. In Seattle, tenants with Section 8 vouchers are protected from this kind of discrimination.

Seattle tenants are also protected by a local housing code, a "Rental Housing Inspection Program" that periodically inspects the condition of run-down rental buildings, a relocation assistance program for displaced veterans, and regulation of rental contracts. None of these protections exist in Thurston County.

The Thurston County Tenants Union needs members to help the union grow into a force for change. As a grassroots, non-partisan, direct action organization of members, we seek new members to shape our vision.

Possible projects include (but need not be limited to):

- A local hotline, staffed by volunteers trained specifically in landlord-tenant law for Thurston County residents
- Public outreach and education on specific issues such as discrimination
- Advocacy and assistance to tenants in conflict with landlords
- Organized advocacy to protect tenants' legal rights and to promote changes in state and local law to improve life for Thurston County renters.

The Thurston County Tenants Union will have a general meeting on Thursday, November 20 at 8:00pm at the the Olympia Timberland Library (313 8th Ave. SE). All tenants and tenant advocates are invited to attend. Call 413-4438 if you would like more information about the Tenant's Union or would like to become a volunteer. ■

UP FRONT

An Hour at the License Office

Jerome Johnson

I had occasion to go to the Licensing office the other day. I was on company business, which took me to the DOL office in Centralia. I got there at about eight-thirty, after a nice drive down the freeway. I checked in, then sat down in the empty waiting area with the paper, as my business would take about an hour.

A few minutes went by, then the door opened. An elderly white man in overalls and work boots stepped up to thecounter and renewed his license. The examiner's voice was smooth from daily repetition of the same questions.

"Have you, in the past six months, experienced seizure, fainting, or anything else to impair operating a motor vehicle?"

"No," the man answered.

"Please read line two in the center group."

"A,F,Z,D,O."

"That's it. Is this address accurate?"

"Yes."

"Would you like to be an organ donor?"

"Oh, no."

"Are you now, and if not would you like to be a registered voter?"

"No."

This last got my attention. The man was easily old enough to be a war veteran; he probably was a veteran of World War II. He'd probably worked all his life--he sure looked like it, and he didn't look rich either. And Centralia is Reagan country. Yet he didn't vote. I shrugged and went on reading.

The door opened again, and this time a white woman walked in. She looked to be in her mid-sixties. She renewed her license and answered the same questions.

"Are you now and if not would you like to be a registered voter?"

"No."

He'd probably worked all his life--he sure looked like it, and he didn't look rich either. And Centralia is Reagan country. Yet he didn't vote. I shrugged and went on reading.

Now I was interested. I'd been in the office about twenty minutes, since it opened. Despite an oncoming election, two people had refused their right to vote. That meant they hadn't voted for Dole last year, maybe not for Bush in '92. Yet if I called Central Casting for two senior citizen rural Republicans, these two would've been great, by appearance, anyway.

Not being registered, they can't even vote locally.

Next, a young white guy came in to take some sort of test. He went to one of the computers.

A white couple in their forties came in. She got in line and he sat down away from me, along the other wall. She was there to renew her driver's license.

"Are you now and if not would you like to be a registered voter?"

"Yes," she said, rather proudly.

Soon my business was ready, and I left. On the way back to Olympia, I thought about what I'd seen. the woman had already been a registered voter, but I wondered if she voted. If she did, how? I grinned to myself because I realized that I was glad she was at least registered, even if she voted solidly Republican.

As I drove, listening to George Benson's "Breezin,'" I thought about how I would vote this year. It's easier now than ever before. Congress passed the "Motor Voter" law a few years back, so we could register when getting an ID or license, or renewing one. And once you're registered, you often vote by mail. It's great.

I signaled and changed lanes, still think-

(Continued page 5)

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Works In Progress is a community newspaper sponsored by the Thurston County Rainbow Coalition. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Rainbow Coalition or the Workers In Progress and are solely those of the authors.

Submissions:

Correspondence, articles, art, and photographs are always welcome. Please, when possible, put articles on a 3.5" IBM-compatible disk (text preferred). Artwork and photos should be camera-ready/black & white.

WIP reserves the right to publish in whole or part all submissions. For editing purposes, please enclose your phone number. Articles may be reprinted. Please cite source.

If you don't see your issue being covered in Works In Progress, it's because you aren't writing about it! (Or aren't finding someone else to cover it!)

Send submissions to Works In Progress, PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507-0295, worksinprogress@juno.com, or come by our office and drop it in the "WIP Box" located in the back of the Liberation Cafe.

Back Issues:

A complete set of back issues is located in the library of Liberation Cafe along with a chrono-index.

WIP is also being archived on microfilm by the UW Library.

WORKERS IN PROGRESS

Dave Campbell
Frank Hoffman
Teresa Jennings
Jerome Johnson
Evelyn Montague
Wendy Ortiz
Hali Panneton
Tara Perkins
CJ Russo
Marie Smith
Sylvia Smith
Pat Tassoni
Dave Zink

Mission Statement:

"Our aim is to confront injustice and encourage a participatory democracy based on economic, social, and environmental justice. Works In Progress is dedicated to providing a voice for those most affected by the exclusionary and unfair practices that seek to silence the oppressed."

Anti-Discrimination Clause:

We will collectively endeavor to be sensitive and respectful to all those oppressed in this society, and their issues. However, if and when we should make a mistake in this regard, we expect to acknowledge it and to express regret for injury or insult given.

Governing Tool:

The following statement will become part of the Editorial Policy and will be the governing tool for the Anti-Discrimination Clause: *WIP will make every effort to work with the contributor of material considered by WIP to be offensive in order to reach a mutually agreed upon resolution, but WIP reserves the right as a last resort to edit or not print submitted material.*

WIP Schedule

Submission Deadline:

Friday, Nov. 21st

6pm at Liberation Cafe

Proofreading Meeting

Tuesday, Nov. 24th
7 pm at Liberation Cafe

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LETTERS, ETC.

Bread & Roses Opportunity

Are you concerned about homeless issues?

Do you long to be an effective part of your community?

Do you enjoy that warm fuzzy feeling you get when you know you've made a difference?

Do you want to live communally with others who value these same ideals?

Perhaps Bread & Roses is the place for you. We are looking for a few hardworking, dedicated individuals to become staff members with our organization. We are asking for a one year commitment, and a lot of compassion to serve the underprivileged of Olympia.

In return we offer you a free room, all utilities paid, and a comfy cozy home. Did we forget to mention a stipend of $175 a month?

You will be trained to run all three of our operations, our shelter for women and families, our daytime drop-in center, and our soup kitchen.

Positions are available, but not for long. Give us a call at 754-4085 or stop by the house to fill out an application: 1320 8th Ave SE in Olympia.

Get Rid of Capitalism

There is something drastically wrong when a certain capitalist can't decide whether to donate a billion dollars to help pay the national debt or contribute to the United Nations. This borders on insanity. This billion dollars was aquired in nine months. The robber barons of the last century never had it so good. Also, more companies are making a billion dollars a year while the rest of us are clipping grocery coupons and using food stamps. What's more, while companies are making billions they are the ones that poison our air, food with chemicals, water, atmosphere (ozone delpetion) x-rays, and radiation of all kinds, and clear cutting the forests of the U.S. in order to export logs to other countries. Get rid of the rainforests in South America for mega farms and in the process, destroy plant and wildlife. Some species of plant life are gone forever that could cure diseases and even AIDS.

With this much wealth stolen from the working class there also comes very great power that could destroy this republic. The ancient Romans were not destroyed by sex or morals -- the ancient Romans were destroyed by corruption. We the workers have more power than all the billionaires. We have the man who can strike fear into the hearts of the capitalist by the very mentioning his name. That man is Karl Marx and socialism, and the only Socialist Party in the U.S. that follows Karl Marx -- the Socialist Labor Party of the United States of America. PO Box 70507 Sunnyvale, CA 94086-0517. Get rid of capitalism while there is still time.

Milton Poulos

Homeless Animals To Get New Home With Community's Help

Kickoff event in the 18 month fundraising campaign to fully fund the shelter project
Saturday, Nov. 9th, 11am-3pm
Former WA Natural Gas Co.
(3120 Martin Way)

An open house will be held to acquaint visitors with what is in store for homeless animals when the new animal shelter opens its doors in September 1998.

The open house will have something for everyone. Santa Paws will be there to give owners and their pets a photo opportunity. Various forms of entertainment will be given throughout the day. In addition, adoption of shelter animals will be conducted, free nail clipping for pets, educational videos about the operation of the current shelter, tours of the facility with conceptual descriptions of building renovations necessary to meet the unique requirements of an animal shelter, raffles, refreshments, and pet goodies will be part of the festivities.

If you have ever shared your life with a furry, feathered, finned, or other kind of creature as a friend, you are cordially invited. If you have never had a pet but might like to have one some day, this is the place for you to find out what being a caretaker for one means. For more information call Suzanne at 943-3640 x6.

Battered Spirits and Bruised Bodies

Sexual Minority Students, Staff and Families in the Public Schools
Friday, Nov. 14 at 7pm
Oly Unitarian Universalist Church (2200 East End St NW)

This forum will be facilitated by Maureen Considine, a member of the Thurston County Safe Schools Coalition and an editor of the 1997 Safe Schools Anti-Violence Documentation Project Report. Panel members will consist of persons representative of various minority sexual and gender orientations, including youth, family members, parents and school staff. The forum will put a face on the statistics and give voice to the stories of school climate that are unsupportive and intolerant and, at worst, unsafe. Audience members and panelists alike will have the opportunity to discuss strategies to make every school a safe place where every family can belong, every educator can teach and every student can learn, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

The event is sponsored by several Thurston County organizations. A free-will donation will be collected to support the Thurston County Safe Schools Coalition. Child Care will be available upon request. For more information call 352-9507.

The Natural Step: A Model for Sustainability

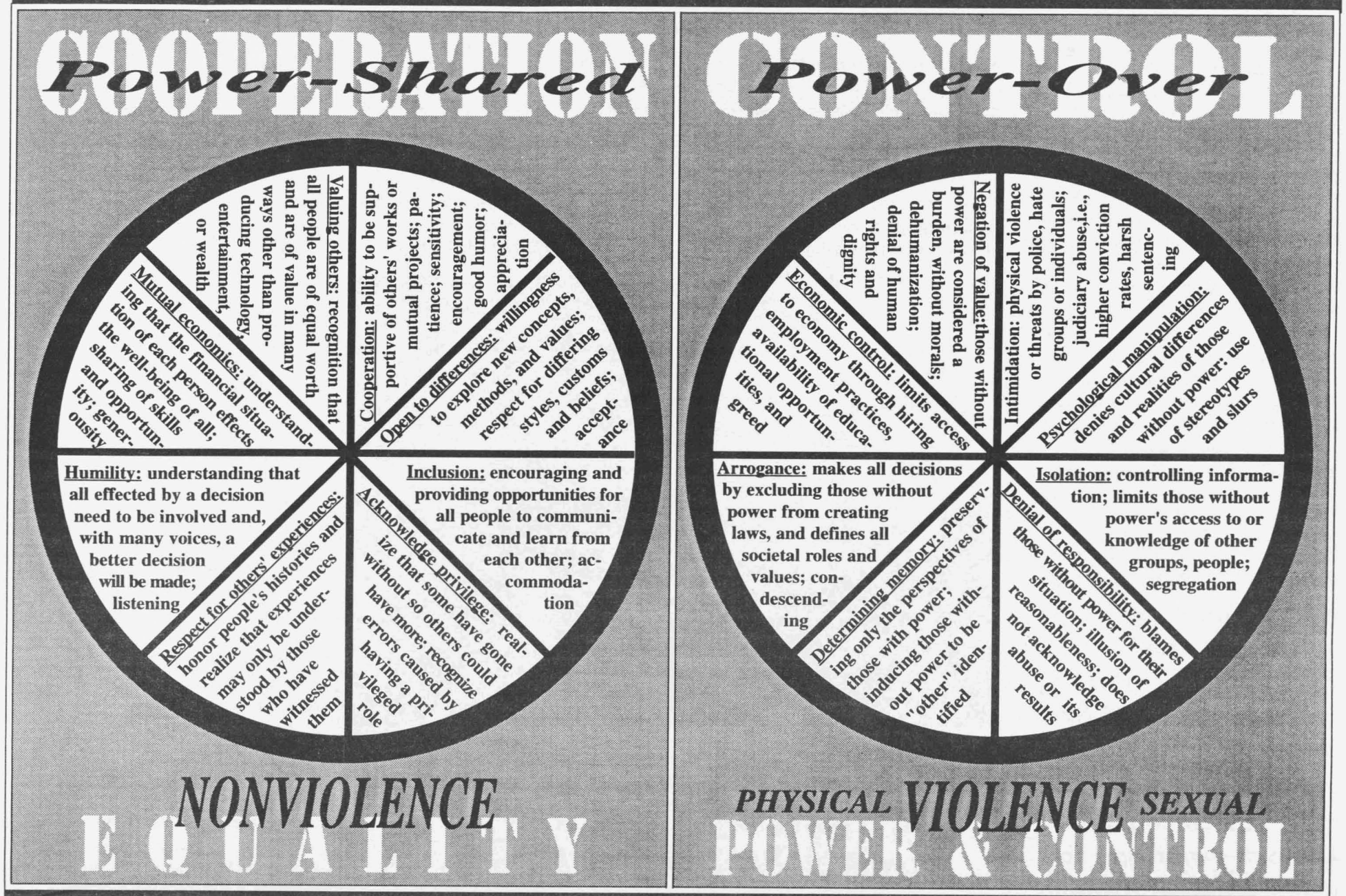
with Margit Bantowsky, Toxics Reduction Engineer, WA DOEc
Thursday, Nov. 20 at 7pm
Formerly Four Seasons Books

What exactly are the Rules of the Game? this is the question that Karl-Henrick Robert, a physician and cancer researcher, challenged the Swedish community to reach consensus over. After several years, 21 working drafts and endorsements by 50 prominent scientists, he crafted the "Four Systems Conditions" for a sustainable relationship between humans and the environment. The goal of the Natural Step is to develop and share a common framework of easily understood, scientifically-based principles that can guide us toward a just and sustainable future.

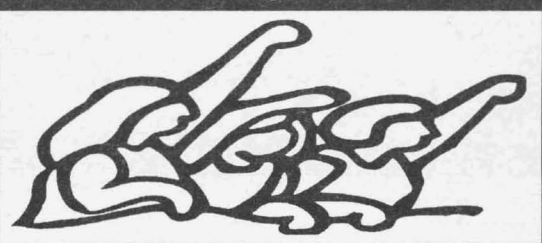
Come learn what these principles are and explore how they apply to industry, communities and individuals.

Sponsored by the Sustainable Community Roundtable. For more info call 754-7842.

NOVEMBER 1997


COOPERATION
Power-Shared
Cooperation: ability to be supportive of others' works or mutual projects; patience; sensitivity; encouragement; good humor; appreciation
Open to differences: willingness to explore new concepts, methods, and values; respect for differing styles, customs and beliefs; acceptance
Inclusion: encouraging and providing opportunities for all people to communicate and learn from each other; accommodation
Acknowledge privilege: realize that some have gone without so others could have more; recognize errors caused by having a privileged role
Respect for others' experiences: honor people's histories and realize that experiences may only be understood by those who have witnessed them
Humility: understanding that all effected by a decision need to be involved and, with many voices, a better decision will be made; listening
Mutual economics: understanding that the financial situation of each person effects the well-being of all; sharing of skills and opportunity; generousity
Valuing others: recognition that all people are of equal worth and are of value in many ways other than producing technology, entertainment, or wealth
CONTROL
Power-Over
Negation of value:those without power are considered a burden, without morals; dehumanization; denial of human rights and dignity
Intimidation: physical violence or threats by police, hate groups or individuals; judiciary abuse,i.e., higher conviction rates, harsh sentencing
Psychological manipulation: denies cultural differences and realities of those without power: use of stereotypes and slurs
Isolation: controlling information; limits those without power's access to or knowledge of other groups, people; segregation
Denial of responsibility: blames those without power for their situation; illusion of reasonableness; does not acknowledge abuse or its results
Determining memory: preserving only the perspectives of those with power; inducing those without power to be "other" identified
Arrogance: makes all decisions by excluding those without power from creating laws, and defines all societal roles and values; condescending
Economic control: limits access to economy through hiring practices, employment availability of educational opportunities, and greed
NONVIOLENCE
EQUALITY
PHYSICAL VIOLENCE SEXUAL
POWER & CONTROL

Adapted from the Power & Control and Equality Wheels developed by the Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
"We have to get it into our heads once and for all that we cannot settle disputes by eliminiating human beings." Jeannette Rankin				"Until the great mass of the people shall be filled with the sense of responsibility for each other's welfare, social justice can never be attained." Helen Keller		**1** **1950** - Assassination attempt against President Truman by two Puerto Rican Nationalists
2 **1963**- US backed military coup deposes S Vietnam government, murders Pres. Diem	**3** **1883**- Supreme Court rules Native Americans are aliens **1896**- Idaho grants suffrage to women	**4** **1995** - Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is assasinated **1996** - FBI says hate crimes increasing	**5** **1916**- Everett massacre: at least six wobblies killed **1993** - Larry Rogers stabbed in Lacey	**6** **1913**- Gandhi is arrested by British troops in India **1996** - Adam Smith defeats Randy Tate	**7** **1996**- Army charges captain/2 sergeants in rape/harassment of women recruits in Maryland	**8** **1975**- Kent state charges dropped 1996 - child dies of E. coli in Denver from Odwalla juice
9 **1938**- Crystal Night: Bands of Nazis roam streets destroying jewish synagogues, homes, and stores	**10** **1917**- 41 suffragettes from 15 states are arrested outside the White House for picketing	**11** **1889**- Washington admitted to Union **1933**- Black Blizzard: 1st great dust storm in Midwest	**12** **1996** - Ernst Home Centers announces closing all stores, laying off 60 employees in Olympia	**13** **1995** - Cherry pickers file suit to force Wenatchee grower to comply w/health and safety regs	**14** *full moon* ● **1995** - UN world biodiversity report claims 10,000 animals/ plants threatened w/ extinction	**15** **1996** - Texaco announces it will pay $176.1 million to settle a race discrimination suit
16 **1900**- African-american youth, accused of murder, is burned at the stake in Colorado	**17** **1948**- House of commons nationalizes British steel industry ending private ownership of mills	**18** **1996** - Thurston Commissioners authorize more monies for record #s of low-income vets	**19** **1996** - Olympia Salvation Army agrees to shelter men who don't comply with self-help rules	**20** **1995** - WA state trooper fired for delaying couple en route to an abortion appointment in '94	**21** **1995** - Boeing workers vote to continue strike **1995** - Dow Jones goes above 5,000	**22** **1916**- Jack London, who suffered from depression, died of taking an excess of morphine
23 **1995** - Journal Science: 1 in 92 young men have HIV; 1 in 33 young African-american men	**24** **1995** - Ireland voters narrowly pass a referendum removing the constitutional ban on divorce	**25** **1955**- Interstate Commerce Commission bans segregation in buses and waiting rooms	**26** **1975**- Pres. Ford announces his support for 2.3 billion federal bail out of NY City	**27** **1937**- NY International ladies' Garment Workers produce a musical, "Pins and Needles"	**28** **1995** - Gov Lowry declares state of emergency in Thurston County due to flooding	**29** **1864**- United States troops massacre Cheyennes in Sand Creek, CO ending "uprising"
30 **1906**- Roosevelt denounces segregation of Japanese school children in San Francisco	"Love lights more fires than hate extinguishes." - Ella Wheeler Wilcox "Alone we can so do little; together we can do so much." - Helen Keller "War is the unfolding of miscalculations. " - Barbara Tuchman "You cannot shake hands with a clenched fist." - Indira Gandhi "Forgiveness is the key to action and freedom." - Hannah Arendt					

OCTOBER

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DECEMBER

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Labor Practices of the World's Largest Shoe Manufacturer-- NIKE

Frank Hoffman

Nike is not the only international corporation that has no respect for its workforce. However, it is one of the largest and the most cynical. When women factory workers in South Korea begin successful organising, Nike moved to Indonesia; when its labor practices in Indonesia began to get worldwide attention, it moved to Vietnam; and when the City of Beaverton, Oregon, where Nike's worldwide headquarters is located, balked at Nike's expansion plans, Nike threatened to move to Washington State. This is the company that, during the Olympics, had the advertising slogan, "You didn't win a silver. You lost a gold."

As Nike abandons its workers in Indonesia, as it abandoned its workers in Korea and as it abandoned its workers in this country, those of us not overwhelmed by greed or buried under indifference, need to continue to reach out to each other and to other workers around the world.

Max White lives 12 miles from Nike headquarters in Beaverton. He believes that Indonesian children or Korean children or Vietnamese children, have as much worth and value as his children or mine or yours. And that children should not be exploited by the American Corporation down the road from his home.

Nike closed its last U.S. shoe factory in 1984. It moved those thousands of jobs to countries that do not tolerate labor organising or disruption of any kind and where wages in Nike factories are $2.60 a day. American workers were getting between $64 and $88 a day. Since the price of Nike shoes didn't go down, where did that increase in profit go? It goes into convincing high school students, like those Max White talked with in Olympia a couple weeks ago, that Nike shoes are basic needs.

We don't like to hear about the connection between our consumer habits and the lives of those who make what we consume. We want to believe that the worker who made the shoes we bought in the Mall goes home to his family at night content he has provided for them, as content as we are with the purchase of what he has made. The fact is, the young woman who sew the shoes can't support a family on $2.60 a day and chances are she was allowed only one bathroom break during her 8 hour shift.

We can try to deny these facts, or we can go barefoot, or we can try to help those factory workers by confronting Nike.

Max White started confronting Nike when a group he belongs to, Amnesty International, got involved in a campaign about Indonesia and asked local groups to contact U.S. businesses that have workers there - like G.M., Reebok and Nike. Since Nike was just down the road, Max began corresponding with it. That is, he sent them letters about their labor practices in Indonesia and Nike didn't answer. An international campaign developed around Nike labor practices. Then Nike began a dissembling public relations campaign disavowing knowledge of its labor practices, and when that failed, tried to get us to believe it's not responsible. When that didn't work, it sent former U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young to report back about its treatment of overseas workers. Growth of Nike stock leveled off. Apparently people believed Gary Trudeau's comic strip about Nike more than they believed Andrew Young's glowing report.

photo by hali panneton

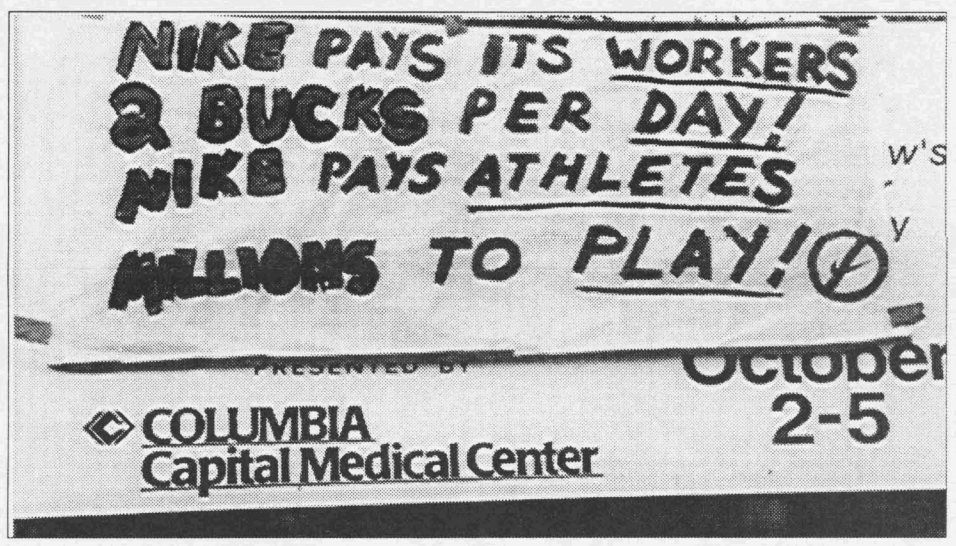


photo by hali panneton

The same Olympia people who invited Max White here to talk about his confronting of Nike helped organize a demonstration at the Indian Summer golf course in Lacey during the Nike Open on October 5, 1997. The 150 people at this demonstration carried signs and chanted for 3 hours while the final round of the Nike tournament was being played.

Nike officials wouldn't talk to the demonstrators.

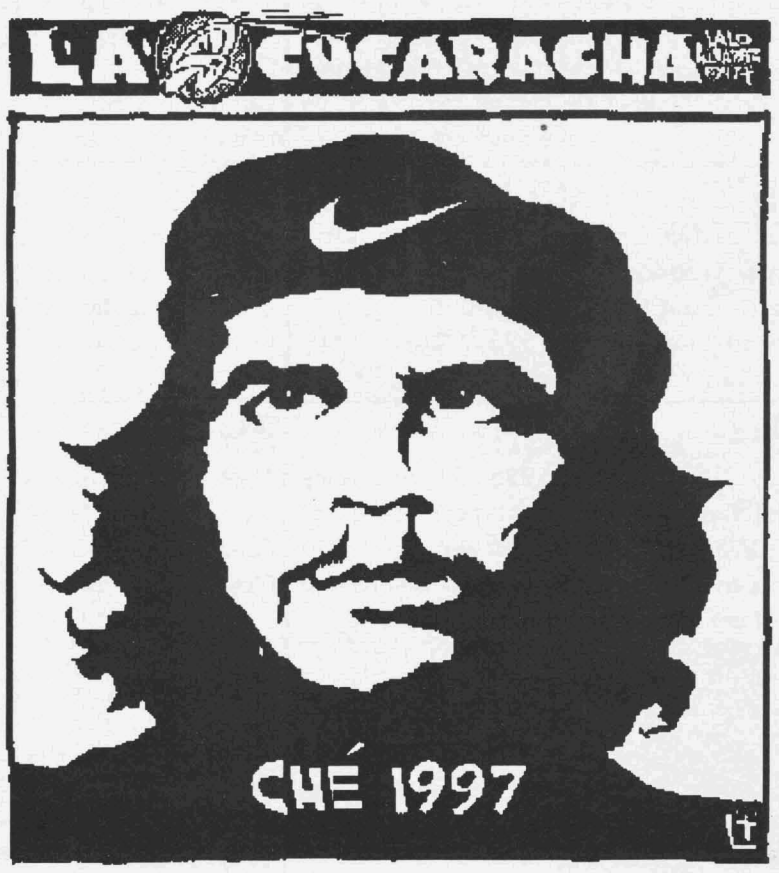
Thurston County Sheriff Officer Gary Griffins walked around threatening to arrest various people for various things.

Heidi Liebetrau,there reporting for The Olympian, seemed entertained by the larger than life size puppets that depicted some of Nike child labor practices. Her article in The Olympian ended quoting the Nike Web site about the Andrew Young report and included very little of the data given to her about how Nike treats its workers. The Olympian was one of the sponsors of the tournament and gave alot of space to it.

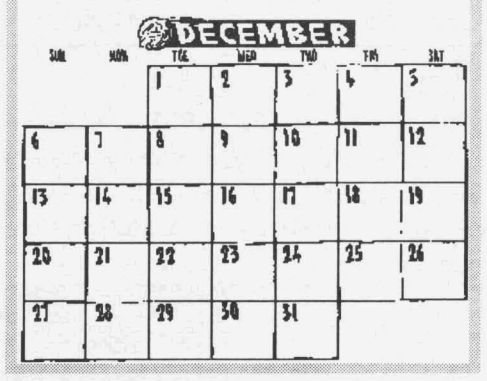
The demonstrators, young and old, confronting Nike in their way, as Max does in his, understand we are all in this together. And we have to try to act accordingly. As Nike abandons its workers in Indonesia, as it abandoned its workers in Korea and as it abandoned its workers in this country, those of us not overwhelmed by greed or buried under indifference, need to continue to reach out to each other and to other workers around the world. Nike is one global example of the cynicism and oppression required by our political economy.

Nike brought a golf tournament to our community that resulted in us knowing better how we are connected to workers in other countries, in other communities. If your children demand Nike products, tell them about the Pakistani boy pictured in Life magazine who is paid 60 cents a day to sit on the ground and handstitch a soccer ball that sells for $80 in Portland. Resist buying what you don't need. Resist believing the nonsense put before us every day about who we are and what we need.

Resist. ■



GET THE 1998 L.A. CUCARACHA CALENDAR!



The 1998 L.A. Cucaracha Calendar has 12 editorial cartoons from the prize winning L.A. Cucaracha and also features some background information behind the issues inspiring the widely read editorial strip, plus dates important to Raza.

The calendario is glossy black and white and sold out last year, so hurry. L.A. Cucaracha is seen in the LA Weekly, HISPANIC Magazine, El Andar, La Prensa San Diego, La Prensa Austin and the Tucson Comic News.

Price is only $12 each, and you can get extras for Xmas gifts at 2 for $22, 3 for $30, 4 for $40.

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Get more info at the Virtual Varrio at www.pocho.com and look for the Cucaracha!

(License, continued)

ing. I'm going to vote for I-677 as a matter of course, of basic decency. If Utah had a law like I-677, Wendy Weaver would still have her job as a volleyball coach and her team would haveprobably won another title. After her divorce she was fired as a high school coach just because of her affection status. She wasn't fired for relations with students--like the heterosexual Mary LeTourneau--or embezzling money, or throwing games. She was fired simply because she is a lesbian, even though she's a fine coach, her teams like her, and she won state titles in '93 and '94. The local school board admitted this, saying that she was fired because of her "lifestyle."

The people of Washington really need I-677.

I'm going to vote against I-676. I have lots of reasons, but the bottom line is I think this initiative is flawed and won't work. Responsible people already use trigger locks and other methods to keep their weapons safe. Irresponsible people and criminals don't give a damn, and I-676 won't change them. It would make legitimate accessto firearms more costly, but those costs won't affect the bad guys. And if the idea is really to reduce accidental shootings, why not extend the requirement to rifles and shotguns as well? Especially since rifles and shotguns are cheaper than handguns, and don't have a waiting period. Thieves will steal a firearm even with a trigger lock, and just pick the lock later.

Like Malcolm and the Panthers, I guess I'm one of those black progressives who believes in firearms for sport, hunting, and self-defense.

In Tripoli, Nelson Mandela receives a hero's welcome for his two day visit.

In Brazzaville, Denis Sassou-Nguesso tightens his bloody grip on power.

In Salt Lake City, Wendy Weaver has filed suit in federal court to fight the loss of her job on the grounds of discrimination.

In Philadelphia, hundreds of thousands of women prepare to march.

And in Olympia, a community watches in consternation as TESC police strap on .40 Glock semiautomatic pistols and go to work, car lights bright in the crisp October night. ■

Keep Washington an Equal Opportunity State

Initiative 200 is Anti-Civil Rights

WIP News Service

What is Initiative 200?

Initiative 200 is an effort to end Washington State programs to correct the effects of discrimination against women and people of color.

Deceptively labeled the Washington State Civil Rights Initiative, this proposed initiative actually would eliminate the state's Affirmative Action programs for women and people of color, but continue them for veterans and people with disabilities.

Caucasian military veterans, Caucasians with disabilities and Caucasian women already represent more than 75% of the state employees benefiting from affirmative action.

What is Affirmative Action?

Affirmative Action is the federal and state government program established to correct the effects of discrimination.

Through Affirmative Action, women, people of color and people with disabilities who meet the job, contract or college admission qualifications are allowed a fair opportunity to compete. Military veterans are included in Washington State's Affirmative Action programs.

Affirmative Action is not reverse discrimination.

Discrimination is the practice of excluding people.

Initiative 200 would exclude women and people of color from state programs designed to address the effects of discrimination!

Are Affirmative Action programs still needed?

Yes.

Affirmative Action is opening doors previously closed to people of color, women, veterans and the disabled. But unfair advantages created by centuries of discrimination still exist today. For example, although white men make up 43% of the national workforce, they hold 95% of all senior management positions. (Reported by the Federal Glass Ceiling Commission, March 15, 1995, convened by Senator Robert Dole).

In the 1970s, black unemployment was twice as high as white unemployment. In the 1980s, it was two and a half times as high. In the 1990s, it is almost three times as high!

Initiative 200 offers no solutions to the problems created by discrimination. It will make discrimination against women and people of color harder to address in Washington State. Wrongly linking Affirmative Action to "preferential treatment" and "quotas", I-200 seeks to dismantle civil rights in Washington State.

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Who is Behind Initiative 200?

Representative Scott Smith has repeatedly sponsored legislation to reduce the participation of women, people of color, veterans and people with disabilities on government boards, commission, employment, contracting and in education. (See HB2244, 1995).

How Can I Help?

- Decline to sign the Initiative.
- Learn the facts about I-200 and encourage others not to sign.
- Write your local newspaper, government officials and legislators and oppose I-200.
- Request that your city council, agency board or commission pass a resolution opposing this anti-civil rights initiative.
- Volunteer with No !200
- Work with your friends to start a No!200 coalition in your community.

No!200 is a coalition of civic organizations and concerned citizens opposing Initiative 200's attempt to abolish affirmative action programs that ensure equal opportunity for all in Washington State. For more information or to get involved: PO Box 7221 Olympia, WA 98501-7221; (360) 956-0132; WashNo200@aol.com.

Learn the Facts at a Special Issues Forum

November 5th at 7pm
Thurston County Commissioners Chambers
2000 Lakeridge Way SW, Oly

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Works In Progress encourages all persons, who would like to voice opinions or bring attention to issues of concern, to send written text (if on disk, text preferred), recorded voice text, photographs,poetry, and/or art work to:

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Resumes or journalism writing skills are not required. It is recommended that an article be written in the contributor's own voice from her/his perspective. *Works In Progress* challenges the validity of the widely accepted concept of "unbiased journalism."

Ross Gelbspan's new book turns up the heat

Climate in Crisis

Patrick Mazza

Facing the starkly apocalyptic prospect of nuclear war, citizens across the planet in the 1980s rallied against nuclear weapons, a movement which hugely contributed to the end of the cold war. A similar yet in many ways far more difficult challenge is upon us now.

Unlike nuclear war, this apocalypse is already in progress, but moving in slow motion so it is difficult to see. And unlike nuclear weapons, a horrendous and exotic technology easily divorced from everyday life, the source as this apocalypse is mundane and pervasive.

As modern conveniences become necessities, our cars and furnaces and electricity are sending up a cloud into the atmosphere as menacing as the mushroom, but far less visible. The energy that powers our lives is heating up our climate.

The crisis is not tomorrow, but today.

On a slippery slope well lubricated by fossil fuels, we are sliding into a kind of hell on earth. If we do not perceive it and respond in a way that reaches to the source of the problem, the continuum of catastrophe will slip toward worst case scenarios.

We must act now.

Those with any doubt should read Ross Gelbspan's new book, "The Heat Is On: The High Stakes Battle Over Earth's Threatened Climate" (1997, Addison-Wesley). Not only does this Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist detail the overwhelming weight of new scientific evidence for climate change, already apparent in weird weather, disease outbreaks and ecosystem changes, he also uncovers why the biggest story on the planet is not the top story on the evening news, a relentless and unconscionable disinformation campaign waged by the world's fossil fuel industries.

Their purposeful obfuscation of the facts resembles nothing so much as the tobacco industry's long deception, except it is not just the health of customers at stake, but that of the entire planet.

And those who imagine we simply face a slow but bearable increase in heat, resembling a room warming after the thermostat is turned uncomfortably high, might instead visualize a pan of water coming to a boil. One moment, the water shows only small bubbles. Next it is in a rolling boil.

Gelbspan notes recent discoveries based on the record in ancient polar ice cores reveal the climate moves much the same way, by sudden jerks and leaps. Dramatic, global shifts can take place in under a decade. With temperatures projected to go up in the next 100 years as much as in the last 10,000, a roiling climate marked by extreme and unpredictable swings and disturbances is what can be expected.

"The earth's climate system is extremely complex. It is very delicately balanced," Gelbspan says.

Last year the Clinton Administration officially acknowledged climate change is in progress, and embraced a proposed global treaty requiring rapid reductions in greenhouse gases. After the election, however, the administration backpedaled and now endorses more limited reductions to begin only after 2013; all this despite having an "assistant president" Al Gore, who wrote a book on the issue.

Gelbspan has a far more drastic solution, but perhaps the only one equal to the crisis: phase out fossil fuel burning in 10 years, and replace it with climate-friendly renewable energy. That step is well within our means, the author says. And not only could renewable energy provide all the services we gain today from fossil fuels, Gelbspan says — it would "create a huge economic boom. In very short order you would see the renewable energy industry eclipse high tech as the central driving engine of growth of the global economy."

I sat down with Gelbspan recently to talk about climate change, the science, solutions and politics. That conversation follows:

M: First I'd like you to briefly detail the emerging information about climate change. What's been coming out the last couple of years?

As modern conveniences become necessities, our cars and furnaces and electricity are sending up a cloud into the atmosphere as menacing as the mushroom, but far less visible.

G: There are five bodies of evidence. When put together, they create a pretty irrefutable case.

First, a panel of the world's 2,000 leading climate scientists who report to the United Nations concluded at the end of 1995 that the planet is heating very rapidly, that statistics are rather staggering. The 10 hottest years in history have occurred since 1980. The five hottest consecutive years were '91-95. '95 is the hottest year on record. And the planet is heating at a faster rate than anytime in the last 10,000 years.

This panel of scientists concluded that a large part of this heating is definitely due to our emissions of greenhouse gases, primarily carbon dioxide from oil and coal. They also indicated an early stage of global warming is a much more unstable climate. The scientific term of choice is climate change. It has already begun. That involves altered rainfall patterns, much more severe precipitation events, more floods, more droughts, rising sea levels and so forth.

Another body of evidence comes, of all places, from the insurance industry. The world's property insurers are getting clobbered by this succession of extreme weather events that's taking place all over the globe. During the 1980s average losses to property insurers for weather-related disasters were $2 billion a year. In the 1990s they're $12 billion a year. The president of the Reinsurance Association of America said recently that unless something is done to stabilize the climate, it could very well bankrupt the industry.

A third body of evidence involves the spread of infectious diseases. This is primarily due to the fact that insects such as mosquitoes are now able to survive at altitudes and latitudes which were only a short time ago too cold to support their survival. As a result they are spreading yellow fever, dengue and malaria to populations that have never previously experienced them. A team of scientists from The Netherlands recently reported that at current rates of warming, mosquito-borne diseases will increase tenfold in the tropics in the next century and a hundredfold in the temperate regions where we live, with about 80 million new cases of malaria alone each year.

Another body of evidence which I find very compelling has to do not with computer modeling and atmospheric studies or data analysis, but with actual changes to the planet itself. Let me tick off about seven or eight.

Most of the world's glaciers are retreating at accelerating rates. The biggest glacier in the Peruvian Andes was shrinking at a rate of 14 feet a year 20 years ago. It is now retreating at a rate of 99 feet a year. Plants are migrating up the Alps to keep pace with the changing climate.

Whole populations of fish, insects and birds are migrating north to seek stable temperatures. In the last three years three ice shelves have broken off of Antarctica as warming has been detected in the deep waters of the oceans around Antarctica. One was something like 50 by 28 miles (about the size of Rhode Island). This is very, very disturbing. Scientists have long said that would be an absolute bellwether benchmark of atmospheric warming.

In the northern forests in Canada the growth of the trees is beginning to flatten. The trees are becoming less robust because of more carbon dioxide and more insect attacks. In parts of southern Europe a desert is spreading through portions of Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece. Scientists a couple of months ago declared that prolonged drought punctuated by intense soil-eroding rains has become the norm rather than the exception there.

The tundra in northern Canada and Alaska which has for thousands of years absorbed methane and carbon dioxide is now thawing and releasing those (greenhouse) gases back into the atmosphere. To me the most startling of these discoveries is that we have actually altered the timing of the seasons. Because of the build-up of atmospheric CO2, spring is now arriving a week earlier in the Northern Hemisphere than it did 20 years ago.

Put those bodies of evidence together with all these extreme weather events that have happened all over the world — I have tracked about 120 in the last two years, more than one a week, all record-setters. You folks in the Northwest had these tremendous floods and ice storms.

Bolivia had the worst floods in 30 years that destroyed half its crops. You had record flooding along the Ohio River, hell freezing over and thawing in North Dakota and Manitoba. In my own Boston we had a 60-degree Easter Sunday followed two days later by a 30-inch snowfall, the third biggest in Boston's history. Those are anecdotal. But when you put them together with all these bodies of evidence, the case is absolutely conclusive.

M: There's a point people don't understand. They go, "We've just had this very cold winter over the upper Midwest. We had big snowfalls last year. How could we be in global warming?"

G: It's very simple. As overall warming happens, it increases the evaporation of water. It expands the air to hold more water. Then when a normal atmospheric cycle takes place, if it's in winter it releases much more snow. If it's in warmer times, it releases much more rain. So you're getting much more precipitation in very severe and intense downpours.

You're also getting altered patterns of drought. So places that were wet before are now very dry. Places that were dry are now getting much more rain. It's playing havoc with our traditional systems.

One consequence that is very troubling is that the rate of change of our climate vastly exceeds the rate at which ecosystems can adapt. The panel of UN scientists said that most of our ecosystems can adapt to a change of about one degree Celsius per century. In fact, we're looking forward to a change of three to four degrees Celsius in the next century unless we do something very rapidly to limit our greenhouse emissions.

M: And who really can understand the overall consequences of this? I don't think we have a clue.

G: We don't have a clue. They are talking about the potential rise of sea levels up to three feet over the next century. In fact they would continue to rise far beyond that time. It may be easier and far more instructive to think about climate instability, because that's really what's happening.

So even if the average global temperature remained the same and summers became 10 degrees hotter and the winters became 10 degrees colder it would absolutely devastate the world's food supplies.

M: Ross, why aren't we seeing this headlined on the CBS Evening News? Why isn't it a banner story in the New York Times? What's going on here?

G: It's a real tough question, Patrick. I think it involves two elements.

One is there has been a very effective and sustained disinformation campaign

(Continued next page)

(Climate, cont.)

by the oil and coal industry to basically persuade the public that the issue is stuck in the limbo of scientific uncertainty, that it's not proven and there is no basis for us taking any action. That campaign has involved the use, especially by the coal industry, of about a half-dozen scientists who are skeptical about this. They are calling themselves "greenhouse skeptics." They are not particularly well-regarded by the mainstream scientific community. Nevertheless they have received hundreds of thousands of dollars in undisclosed funding from oil and coal interests, from OPEC, from US, British and German coal, from Cyprus Minerals and so forth. Because of that they have had access to the media, and they have been able to maintain a relentless drumbeat of doubt in the public mind.

There is another reason beyond that, simply the larger human reaction of psychological denial. The prospect of a warmer, wetter world conjures images of storms, disease, heat and discomfort. That is very, very frightening and very threatening. The natural human reaction is to not want to believe it, to try to look away from it. As long as the oil and coal companies had their access to the media, the public was very relieved to hear global warming was a non-event.

M: You have a vignette in your book which is really stunning, about a three-night seminar at Harvard Medical School on the environmental consequences of human activities — first evening well attended, second evening about half the crowd, third evening just a handful of folks. When the presenter went around to find out why, people said they found this overwhelming. So they went back to what they could deal with. Here you have people who are truly in an elite category, who should probably have the wherewithal to deal with these difficult circumstances. If people in this category can't deal with it, who can?

G: Absolutely, these are concerned, intelligent, public-service-oriented and sensitive people. But the main thing they told the professors was, "You're not giving us anything to do about it. And we can't live with that feeling of helplessness. So our only reaction is not to attend these seminars." It's very important that the general public gets the message there is something we can do about it that would benefit us all in many ways.

M: You've been touring the country talking about your book. What kind of reaction have you been getting?

G: I have been getting reactions that make me very frustrated. They are terrific. I have gotten very, very favorable reactions from the one group of people who I expect to be the harshest critics, journalists. Most of them have been very complimentary about the book. When I have given speeches to groups, and this is where my frustration comes in, they all say, "This is really important. Our own intuition confirms it, our recognition of the wacky weather that's been going on. What can we do about it?" And I don't know what to tell them.

M: It seems we've got to look to a political solution. You've already detailed how this major interest is holding back a political solution.

G: A lot of the banks are now coming on board with the issue. There was a stunning breaking of ranks in the oil industry (in May). The president of the US branch of British Petroleum made a major speech to Stanford University in which he said we are departing from the rest of the oil industry. We recognize that climate change is here. We recognize that we must begin to deal with it. And we are beginning to invest in a major solar facility. As a statement from that industry, it was a major breakthrough.

What we really need is this — some political will and leadership to begin to basically rewire the world and replace all our gasoline-burning cars, oil-burning furnaces and coal-fired generating plants with renewable energy. Hydropower when it's appropriate, but windmills, fuel cells, solar panels, all these technologies can give us all the energy we need.

I'm not talking about any decline in our current standard of living. The only thing that keeps them non-competitive is the fact they're still a boutique industry. As soon as they get up to levels of mass production and economies of scale, they will become competitive on a per-kilowatt-hour basis. What we need to do is jumpstart those industries.

The first thing that I would see domestically in the United States as a very manageable legislative mandate is this — The federal government is right now spending about $25 billion a year to subsidize coal and oil. If those subsidies were diverted to renewables it would provide the lift-off boost to put them into the big league of global industry.

Another dimension is very important, relations between the developing world and the countries of the north. The next big pulse of carbon that's going to accelerate the warming of the planet will not be coming from the US, Japan and Western Europe. It will be coming from China, India, Mexico, Brazil, Eastern Europe and Latin America, all these economies that are struggling to keep ahead of the undertow of poverty. As a result, what has to happen is a transfer of these climate-friendly renewable technologies to these countries.

Unfortunately, most of the business community, which is operating on the free market principles of the global marketplace, sees the climate crisis as yet another opportunity to sell yet another category of goods to poor countries who can barely feed and educate their own poverty-stressed populations. It's not going to work. They cannot afford energy transitions.

Bill Ruckelshaus, who was the first administrator of the Environmental Protection Administration, and is currently CEO of Browning-Ferris Industries, said to me you have to sell this transfer of climate-friendly technologies not as a liberal do-good, give away program, but as a critical investment in our national security. I believe that is very important. There is a great line from an Argentine climate negotiator named Raul Estrada. He said recently, we are all adrift in the same boat and there is no way only half the boat is going to sink.

M: Where's Al Gore been on all this? He wrote a book about it. People had great hopes that he would do something. He 's supposedly an assistant president with more power than any vice president has had before. Where is he? What's he doing?

G: He has worked behind the scenes at some level with the insurers and with some of the bankers. He has kept a very low profile on the issue. I think the vice president is a very, very politically cautious individual. I personally am, and I know most of the environmental community is, very disappointed, both with Gore's lack of visibility and with the administration's own withdrawal, even from last summer.

Last summer they announced that they accept the science officially, and they were calling for certain emissions reductions by the time that the current climate treaty is concluded in December. Since then they have withdrawn. They have said they will opt for very much lower levels of emissions reductions. They have rolled forward the date at which they should start to the year 2013.

There is a third and most unconscionable retreat — They have adopted the position of the oil companies and the OPEC nations that any emissions reduction that the US and the OPEC countries undergo must fall equally heavily on China, India, Mexico and Brazil. That is totally a non-starter. That is a strategy the oil interests have pursued throughout these negotiations. It is guaranteed to stalemate them, and is a recipe for failure,. yet the administration of which Vice President Gore is a part has embraced this position. It's very destructive.

M: You have proposed a pretty radical solution yourself, which is to phase out fossil fuel burning in 10 years. Do you think we can possibly do that?

G: The world right now is talking about emissions reductions of 5-10 percent and so forth. The science tells us we must cut our emissions by 60-70 percent if we are to restore the atmosphere to a hospitable state. I do not believe that piecemeal actions will do it. What has to happen has to happen on a very large scale. The solution has to be of the same order of magnitude as the threat itself. Can we do it? Certainly. This is a country that created an atomic bomb in two-and-one-half years and put a man on the moon in 10 years. So if there were political will, of course we could do it. There's no question about it.

What we don't understand is the incredible economic potential of such a move. The oil and coal industries tell us that something like a 15-percent emissions reduction would cost us five percent of our Gross Domestic Product. What they don't tell us is that the kind of energy transition I'm talking about would create a huge economic boom. It would create millions and millions of jobs all over the world. It would close the gap between the north and the south. In very short order you would see the renewable energy industry eclipse high tech as the central driving engine of growth of the global economy. Once we begin to understand we can both have more prosperity and bring our activities in line with limits of the planet, I think it could be accomplished in very short order.

M: I have a question about one of your proposed solutions, hydrogen fuel. The only byproduct of burning hydrogen is water vapor, but isn't water vapor a greenhouse gas?

G: Water vapor at lower levels doesn't go way up in the atmosphere and amplify warming. Hydrogen gas would be able to be made competitive. It could simply replace natural gas. It could be used to power our automobiles and airplanes and so forth. It's one of a variety of very viable energy sources that would not contribute to the warming of the planet.

M: Just to wrap up, you said in your book if we don't respond we are threatened with a major breakdown of systems, not only ecological, but political, and that democracy itself would probably not survive a century of harsh climate change.

G: That was said to me independently by two people, a Nobel laureate from MIT and also Bill Ruckelshaus, who told me that long before the systems of the planet collapse the institutions of democracy will buckle under the pressure of a succession of ecological emergencies. That is very easy to foresee when you see the spread of infectious diseases, disruptions in food supply, tremendous increase in environmental refugees from flooding and newly uninhabitable areas.

Even in the United States, scientists discovered last year that a prolonged drought could turn the wheatfields of Kansas and Nebraska into a desert of sand dunes in a decade. That is not the kind of climate in which democracy flourishes. It's the kind of climate in which you can very easily see the militarization of relief operations to keep social order, in which you can see a black market arising because of food shortages.

It's very hard to see how a democracy could maintain itself in any kind of orderly fashion given these kinds of crises.

M: What's up to us is to respond, to begin to talk about this and to bring to the foreground of our politics.

To find out what you can do, contact the Atmosphere Alliance at atmosphere@olywa.net, 360-352-1763, or 2103 Harrison Ave NW #2615, Olympia, WA 98502.

patmazza@teleport.COM ■

Gelbspan: "The solution has to be of the same order of magnitude as the threat itself. Can we do it? Certainly. This is a country that created an atomic bomb in two-and-one-half years and put a man on the moon in 10 years. So if there were political will, of course we could do it. There's no question about it."

Remember when money made in town stayed in town? HOURS does!

In December the Sound Exchange will celebrate its first anniversary. The Sound Exchange is an all volunteer organization which prints and circulates locally made money in the local economy. Think of it as a Chamber of Commerce for individuals and businesses who accept HOURS for their goods and services. In just one year more than 300 individuals and businesses have circulated over $15,000 in local currency: The Sound HOUR. HOURS are printed in three denominations, exchanging at the same rate as the US $1, $5 and $10. By calling the money HOURS we encourage people to think about fair and equitable pay for an hour's work (with $10 per hour being considered a fair minimum wage). One of the greatest strengths of HOURS is that they stay here in our local community, enriching us over and over every time they are earned and spent. Federal Reserve Notes too often come to town, shake a few hands, and leave.

The Sound Exchange is an all volunteer organization which prints and circulates locally made money in the local economy.

The Winter Community Bazaar will publicly celebrate the first year of the Sound Exchange by bringing together a potpourri of goods and services under one roof. More than 50 vendors will be displaying their crafts, portfolios, goods, etc. Where else can you meet your new Spanish tutor, buy unique Christmas gifts, eat great food and swap your old clothes for new ones all under one roof?

Saturday, December 13th from 10 AM to 8 PM the celebration will unfold at the Eagle's Hall on the corner of Plum and 4th Ave. in downtown Olympia. You'll have an opportunity to explore this microcosm of your community with the pleasant background of live music, jugglers, great food and fun for the kids. Some of the puppets from the Procession of the Species will be looking over your shoulders reminding you of the good times to come in the spring! This event is free and open to the general public. Federal Reserve notes will be accepted by most participants. However, becoming a member and using the new currency will be an enticing opportunity at the Bazaar because the $10 membership fee is immediately rewarded with $40 in Sound HOURS, (which is the equivalent of $40) plus two listings in the HOUR Town directory. So you can start spending your new currency right away.

Who else is using Sound HOURS? Look for the sign "We Proudly Accept Sound HOURS" in the window of places you shop. If you don't see it, ask anyway. Many new businesses are coming on board.

Here's a partial listing of local business members: Bent Branch Bonzai, Gaia Live Herbs, Olympia Food Coop, Sew What!, Blue Heron Bakery, Garden Works Greenhouse, Olympia Painting Exchange, Shady Grove Farm, Botanical Bounty, Harris Designs, Oyster Bay Herb Company, Simply Life Farm, Budget Mini-Storage, Joyous Creations, Pacific Stage, Soundwave Publishing, Cascadia Products, Kirsop Farm, Painless Windows, St. Jude Farm, Cobbworks, Lighthouse Herbs, Pleasant Peasant, Streetfolk Music, Common Ground Farm, Lora Shin Candles, Red Apple Health Foods, Terran Design, Endicott Herbs, Mas Bone Promo, Rising River Farm, The City Limits, Fairie Herbs, Old School Pizza, Seize the Data, Traditions Cafe and Folk Art, Flying Rhino, Olympia Community Yoga Center, Serene Woodworking, White Bird Studios.

The idea of spending local currency is modeled after the very successful Ithaca Hour (created in Ithaca, NY) which has been increasing in circulation for over 5 years and has had a $2 million impact on the economy there. To find out more about the Sound Exchange and other local currencies look at their web site at www.olywa.net/vision. ■

Olympia Political/Cultural Center A.K.A. Liberation Cafe

(360) 352-7336 - 116 4th Ave in downtown Olympia (above Bulldog News)
LiberationCafe@juno.com and http://members.aol.com/LiberCafe/Pandp.html

November Events at the Cafe

1st Saturday - 6pm - Day of the Dead Celebration: March from Sylvester Park to the Liberation Cafe. Music, food, and celebration afterward. Benefit for PCUN, the Oregon farm worker's labor organization.

7th, Friday - 7pm - Human Rights and the Sanctions Against Iraq. Returned humanitarian aid activist Eric Ustus talks about his experience in Iraq and how U.S. sanctions against Iraq are affecting civilian life.

9th, Sunday-7pm- IWW Presentation on the Centralia Mural. The Olympia Industrial Workers of the World will give a history of the Centralia Massacre and the recently erected mural.

14th, Friday - 7pm - Affirmative action and Proposition 200. Panel discussion on the issues involved and preventing a similar proposition in Washington.

21st, Friday - 7pm - Speak Out on Police Harrasment. Open mic on police harrassment of youth in Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater. Presentation by Olympia CopWatch on your rights when stopped by cops.

27th, Thursday - 5pm - Anti-Thanksgiving Thanksgiving Celebration. Discussion of Thanksgiving's real history of racism and genocide. Potluck, music with Citizen's Band, and celebration of Olympia's activist community.

Weekly Events:

Mon. 7pm: free Spanish Class; Wed. 7pm: Liberation Cafe meetings; Thurs. 3pm: Books To Prisoners; IWW: second and last Sundays of every month at 5pm; Sundays: Sewing Circle, Olympia Giant Puppet Collective: call for times.

LIBERATION CAFE NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT!

Liberation Cafe is a member-supported non-profit organization. We are able to maintain the space and put on events because of the support of our community. Membership is the simpliest way for you to help. To find out how to get involved, or to schedule meetings or events, please call Tara at 352-7336 or come by.

The Cafe is not currently wheelchair accessible. For accomodations to meetings and/or events please call 413-5779.

WIP Ad Rep Opening

***Works In Progress* seeks outgoing person to sell advertising for progressive community newspaper. This is a paid position, commission to be negotiated.**

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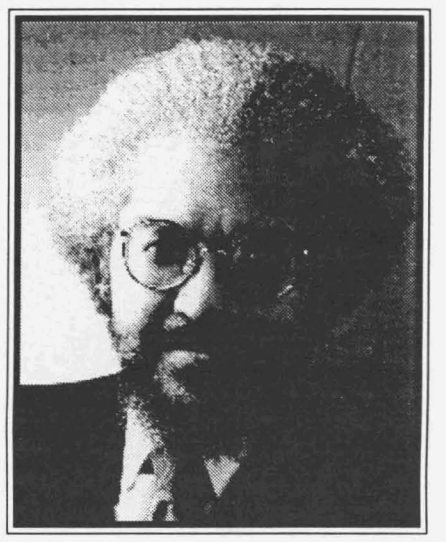
Along the Color Line

Struggling to Pay the Rent



Dr. Manning Marable

The majority of all African-American families are renters, not homeowners. Most people with low incomes, racial minorities and the unemployed, are always confronted with the difficult challenge of finding decent housing which they can afford. Increasingly for millions of Americans -- black, Latino, Asian and white alike -- that challenge has become an "impossible dream."

A recently released study by the National Low Income Housing Coalition, which represents a broad spectrum of housing advocacy groups, fully documents this growing problem. The study observed: "Housing costs, for most people, represent the largest monthly expense. Most people pay their rent first, buying food, clothing and health care with what remains."

The report used an index developed by the Department of Housing and Urban Development to estimate the cost of decent but modest housing in cities and states throughout the U.S. The study found that in almost every state "more than 30 percent of renters paid more than they could afford for one-bedroom apartments and more than 40 percent did so for two-bedroom apartments."

Not surprisingly, housing conditions were worse in major urban centers and in states with high concentrations of low income working class and unemployed people, such as New York. The study found that 48 percent of all renters in New York State were unable to afford the estimated fair market rent for a one-bedroom apartment, $687, and 54 percent were unable to afford a two-bedroom rent, $796. The report estimated that New York renters would have to earn wages exceeding $13.22 an hour to afford a one-bedroom apartment, and $15.32 an hour to afford a two-bedroom apartment.

We need to devote a greater share of national resources to guarantee that clean, basic shelter is considered an inalienable right. No one should be homeless or poorly housed, in a land of vast material affluence.

Even these dire statistics fail to capture the vast social consequences of the housing crisis. Hundreds of thousands of families in New York City, largely black and Latino, live doubled or tripled up with their relatives, friends and neighbors. Crowded housing conditions push poor families frequently into unsafe or unsanitary conditions, threatening the health and welfare of their children. Youngsters who have no space for homework and study are less competitive when they go to school. The lack of adequate shelter directly contributes to domestic violence and spousal abuse.

What are the solutions to address the housing crisis? Conservatives who say that the federal government should get out of the housing business, and let the marketplace determine the availability and cost of shelter by the laws of supply and demand, are just wrong. The private sector overall has little interest in constructing millions of new housing units for people of modest means. Luxury condominiums and shopping malls have larger profit margins. We need to devote a greater share of national resources to guarantee that clean, basic shelter is considered an inalienable right. No one should be homeless or poorly housed, in a land of vast material affluence.

But the real solution to the housing crisis can only be achieved by raising all incomes to meet the cost of basic human needs. In short, you can't pay the rent if you don't have a job, or if the job you have doesn't earn enough for you to pay your monthly bills, including rent.

According to the research of the New York based National Jobs for All Coalition, as of 1996 there were nearly 17 million adults working full-time, year-round jobs, who were earning less than the poverty level for a family of four. Another 4.3 million workers have part-time jobs, but aren't able to get full-time positions. Adding to these millions of Americans are the displaced former recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children. The draconian 1996 Welfare Bill hurled a million children into poverty, and coerced hundreds of thousands of women into workfare programs and low wage jobs that don't pay enough to afford decent shelter.

Building more affordable housing is helpful, but not enough. Only when all Americans have a real living wage or a guaranteed income if they are unable to work, will all of us be able to pay the rent.

Dr. Manning Marable is Professor of History and Director of the Institute for Research in African-American Studies at Columbia University, New York City. "Along the Color Line" is distributed free of charge and regularly appears in over 325 black and progressive publications worldwide. ■

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UPDATES, BRIEFS, ETC.

Fast Track Update

by Michael MacSems

Although the mainstream media has paid it little attention, proponents of Fair, rather than "Free," Trade are poised to make history in November, should we be able to force Clinton, the Democratic and Republican leadership and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to table there attempt to pass Fast Track this year. Fast Track is a procedure that would allow the President to expand NAFTA to Chile and beyond with a minimum of public debate and no consideration of labor rights or environmental protection. It appears that the pro-Fast Track forces, despite a $3-million war chest, were unprepared to the strong popular resistance to expansion of free trade deals that a majority of Americans feel have not worked in their interest. The activists, and Congressional aides that I have talked to are cautiously optimistic that Fast Track will not be introduced for a house vote before Congress recesses for the year. If this scenario plays out, this will be the first time that a Fast Track authorization has been lost, and will handicap the Free Trader's agenda of NAFTA and APEC expansion as well as the implementation of MAI.

However, this fight will not be over until its over - i.e. Congress adjourns for the year. Linda Smith has publicly stated that she will vote against Fast Track if it goes up for a vote. Adam Smith is still unofficially undecided, although his trade aide says that he is "strongly leaning towards a no vote." The importance of on going calls and letters to our Congresspersons and Senators grow with each passing week. Seattle area Congressman Jim McDermott angered many in the environmental and labor communities when he voted in favor of Fast Track in the House Ways and Means Committee. If you have friends in the 7th District, ask them to call McDermott and tell him that a yes vote is totally unacceptable. The toll-free number for Congress is 1-888- 723-5246. If anyone is inspired to do local activist work on this issue, please call Olympia Stop Fast Track at 754-9585.

WARNING!!!
Sneak Attack to Expand NAFTA to 26 Central America and Carribean Countries

In an attempt to gain momentum for their floundering fast track effort, the Clinton Administration is trying to pass a bill -- H.R. 2644 -- which would expand NAFTA to 26 Central American and Carribean nations. This NAFTA expansion would be one-way -- meaning it would grant non-reciprocal NAFTA privileges.

This NAFTA expansion will be voted on tomorrow as part of the "Suspension Calender". Normally the suspension calender is used for noncontroversial measures but the Administration and their allies in the Republican leadership, are trying to pull a fast one. They hope to sneak this bill through Congress by using the Suspension Calender. The good news is that it can only pass if they have more than two-thirds of the votes. So we can stop this sneaky NAFTA expansion attempt if we have slightly more than one third of the votes. But we must stop it!

BIG BUSINESS GEARING UP FOR FAST TRACK

International Brotherhood of Teamsters

With less than a month left before Congress goes out of session for the year, big business supporters of Fast Track are getting ready to pull out all of the stops. More than 600 corporations and associations have formed a coalition - called America leads on Trade (ALOT) - to drum up support for the legislation, which gives President Clinton the negotiating authority he needs to expand NAFTA. Last month, CEOs from two dozen firms spread across Capitol Hill, along with 150 Proctor & Gamble plant managers. Tom Donohue, the former President of the American Trucking Association who now leads the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, is on a 40 city tour to promote Fast Track, and 50,000 Chamber representatives are mobilizing to lobby Congress. The coalition is also conducting a $3 million media campaign. We didn't expect big business to play dead, so their campaign is no surprise. The bottom line is that we can win - just like we did on the UPS strike - if we continue to go toe to toe with Fast Track's supporters.

FAST TRACK IN TROUBLE, DESPITE COMMITTEE VOTE

International Brotherhood of Teamsters

On October 8th, the House ways and Means Committee approved its version of President Clinton's proposed "Fast Track" legislation - which would give him the trade negotiating authority he needs to expand NAFTA to Latin America and beyond. The vote was 24-14. But only four Democrats on the Committee voted for the bill, with two Republicans voting against it and one Republican not voting. Since the Ways and Means Committee is always more supportive of free trade than Congress as a whole, Fast Track is clearly on the ropes. The White House had lobbied hard in the days prior to the vote in an effort to sway undecided Committee Democrats, but in the end failed to deliver the 5 to 7 Democratic votes that Ways and Means Chairman Bill Archer said were needed to send a positive signal to other Representatives. Fast Track's poor showing in the committee means that Congress is getting the message that this bill falls far short of the mark for protecting workers and the environment in the negotiations of trade agreements.

LUMBER DISPUTE SHOWS NAFTA IN ACTION

by Rich Azar

The Clinton Administration's quest for "fast-track" approval to expand the North American Free Trade Agreement into South America should be delayed until existing mechanisms for resolving trade disputes are improved to protect American interests, according to some NAFTA critics.

"Fast-track" authority disallows time consuming but potentially corrective amendments to a proposed bill. Congress is unlikely to take up fast-track authority this year, but is almost certain to be on the '98 calendar, according to the respected financial publication "The Kiplinger Washington Letter." The president has been without fast-track authority since 1994.

Meanwhile, a bitter and ongoing trade dispute between U.S. lumber yards and a Canadian lumber cartel has underscored what NAFTA opponents consider to be the agreement's pernicious influence on American sovereignty.

Some small and medium-sized American lumber distributors claim they cannot speak out publicly on the issue of so-called "phantom freight" subsidies, which alledgedly harm American consumers, for fear of being ruined. "Would-be whistle blowers have been cowed, cornered and intimidated," according to the president of one affected American lumber firm. The source, who demanded anonymity, said that in order to prove the alleged fraud. "The American lumber distributors are obligated and would necessarily have to disclose their purchase order, transaction date, etc. to the Canadian sawmill. The mills would boycott them, quote them high prices, and sell their more desirable lumber items to the American whistle blower's regional competitors...which could destroy family-owned businesses that have taken generations to build up."

A small group of Canadian lumber companies with multiple mill locations now controls more than 90 percent of western Canadian lumber production. Since 1990, this cartel has allegedly defrauded American independent wholesale lumber distributors, and by extension American consumers, by overstating their freight costs and keeping the records secret.; such secrecy led to the term "phantom freight." The Canadian mills' company-owned wholesale division, which compete against independent U.S. distributors, gain a significant advantage in quoting prices to U.S. consumers, critics charge.

The U.S. Small Business Administration publication, "Anti-trust for Small Business," states that it is "illegal to use transportation methods as a disguised means to fix prices." But the Commerce Department has halted its hurried review of the phantom freight trade subsidy, and in one of the first instances of a foreign trade panel overturning U.S. law, a panel of two Canadians and one American (formed under NAFTA's "Chapter 19" dispute resolution mechanism) has overturned U.S. trade laws governing phantom freight.

"Congress should direct the administration to negotiate the reform or elimination of Chapter 19 from the NAFTA," said national trade attorney Mark Benedict, of McLean, Virginia. "Under this system, international panels -- with foreign nationals frequently in the majority, are allowed to interpret and implement U.S. law, and their decisions have the force of law. Constitutional safeguards...are lost when such panels [made up of politically appointed career bureaucrats] replace U.S. courts."

The illegal phantom-freight issue was the subject of a lawsuit brought by an independent lumber firm, Rivendell Lumber Company of Denver, Colorado, that went bankrupt in 1991. The company sued 15 Canadian lumber producers, who settled out of court for an undisclosed sum that by one estimate reach $20 million. "This was a de facto admission of guilt," said the U.S. lumber distributor.

In a related matter, an August 21 report in the authoritative Journal of Commerce, titled "Record U.S. deficit looms despite soaring exports," cited Commerce Department data showing a probable record trade deficit of around $110 billion by year's end. The report provides additional fodder for anti-NAFTA opponents; the administration continues to argue that NAFTA is needed to open overseas markets for U.S. exports. ■

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Cashing In On Black Prisoners

A.C.L.U.

"African-Americans are grist for the fast-growing prison industry's money mill," says *Emerge* magazine in a cover story entitled, "Crime Pays."

It certainly does pay for those who profit from the expanding correctional-industrial complex, the magazine reports. They include private prison operators, those who build and supply prison cells, the suppliers of food and medicine -- and guards, who recently have realized a new level of clout.

Companies vie for everything from building contracts to the right to sell hair products to prisoners, while economically strapped towns see prisons as a source of jobs.

"I can't see anyone wanting to deter crime," says Curtiss Neal, president of a black-owned prison telephone service company. "Because there are too many people getting rich behind it."

The fear of crime feeds a self-perpetuating cycle: politicians create harsher penalties, as communities compete for facilities, and big financiers underwrite prison construction bonds. But who, *Emerge* asks, is really paying the price for this boom in the prison industry?

The numbers on imprisonment provide the hard facts. The rush to incarcerate has led to a 119 percent increase in the number of inmates from 1985 to June 1996, according to U.S. Justice Department statistics. State incarceration of African Americans on drug charges increased 707 percent for the same period, while the number for whites rose by 306 percent, less than half.

In urban centers, black men involved with the criminal justice system is alarmingly high. According to the National Center on Institutions and Alternatives, on any given day, 50 percent of 18-to-35-year-old African-American men in Washington, DC, were under some form of court supervision or being sought on arrest warrants.

Hubert Williams, president of the Police Foundation and former police director of Newark, NJ, cites the numerous studies that show African-Americans use fewer illegal drugs than whites or Hispanics, yet are incarcerated at a disproportionately higher rate.

"I can't see anyone wanting to deter crime because there are too many people getting rich behind it."

Mohamedu Jones, a staff attorney with the American Civil Liberties Union's Washington-based National Prison Project, agrees.

"When you go through these prisons, and I've been through prisons in 10 states, you are forced to come to one of two conclusions: either that young black men are naturally criminals or that there is something serious wrong with the system."

A Justice Policy Institute study released this year found that in 1995, for the first time, prison construction surpassed college construction. There was an almost dollar-for-dollar trade-off, with prison-building expenditures jumping by $926 million, and university construction dropping by $954 million.

Private prison proponents contend the profit motive forces companies to be more efficient, leading to taxpayer savings. But a federal report reviewing five studies on private prisons said they were inconclusive on the comparative costs and quality of service of private and public prisons.

"I'm completely opposed to the concept of private prisons," Jenni Gainsborough, public policy coordinator of the ACLU's National Prison Project, told *Emerge*. "The most extreme sanction the state has against the individual, short obviously of the death penalty, is imprisonment, and that should not be turned over to an organization whose primary concern is the profit of its shareholders."

Because private prison operators are paid by the head, it is in their financial interests to keep convicts incarcerated, argues Maxine Waters, D-CA, chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus. The profit motive, she says, could weaken rehabilitation and training programs that prepare inmates for release.

But private prison executives say there are more criminal offenders out there than there are prison beds.

Mark Mauer of the Sentencing Project disagrees. That may be true in the short run, he says, but continued prison expansion and declining crime rates eventually may result in an oversupply of prison beds, leading to increased pressure on private operators to keep their beds filled. ■

Jose Francisco Gonzalez Patino

Reasons to Support Books to Prisoners

"I am at this moment serving a lengthy sentence in the Texas Penal system, currently subjected to a new pilot program being initiated against all administrative segregation inmates which prevents any of us to use the unit's school library, and compounded by thefact that we are not allowed to possess nor use either a television or radio."

"I am writing to you to request some books that would help me in my quest for knowledge. Actually, I am having a friend write this letter, for I am in school and improving on my reading and writing skills. I would like to request a picture dictionary or some type of book that names the items in the pictures. I have been tested and I was said to read at a third grade level at present. I hope very much you can help for I want to read new papers, and most important my bible."

"Here in Texas, they can lock you up in solitary for being a "member of a disruptive organization" and keep you there for *your* entire sentence. I'm in lock-up (have been for years) and have *no* access to school college and very limited access to a library." ■

Prison Voices Requested

W.I.P. seeks articles, artwork from those in prison. Please send submissions to:

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- Buy Food! Eat Hearty! Help Books to Prisoners. Bring us all the grocery receipts you can from Bayview and Ralph's Thriftway (dated from Apr. 1997 - Dec. 1997). The project will receive 1%, every penny helps! You can even mail them. (see address below)
- Soup to Soap it all helps! Save the UPC code from any Western Family product bring or mail these to us at B to P, 116 E 4th Ave. Olympia WA 98501
- Books and donations can be dropped off at our workspace above Bulldog News.

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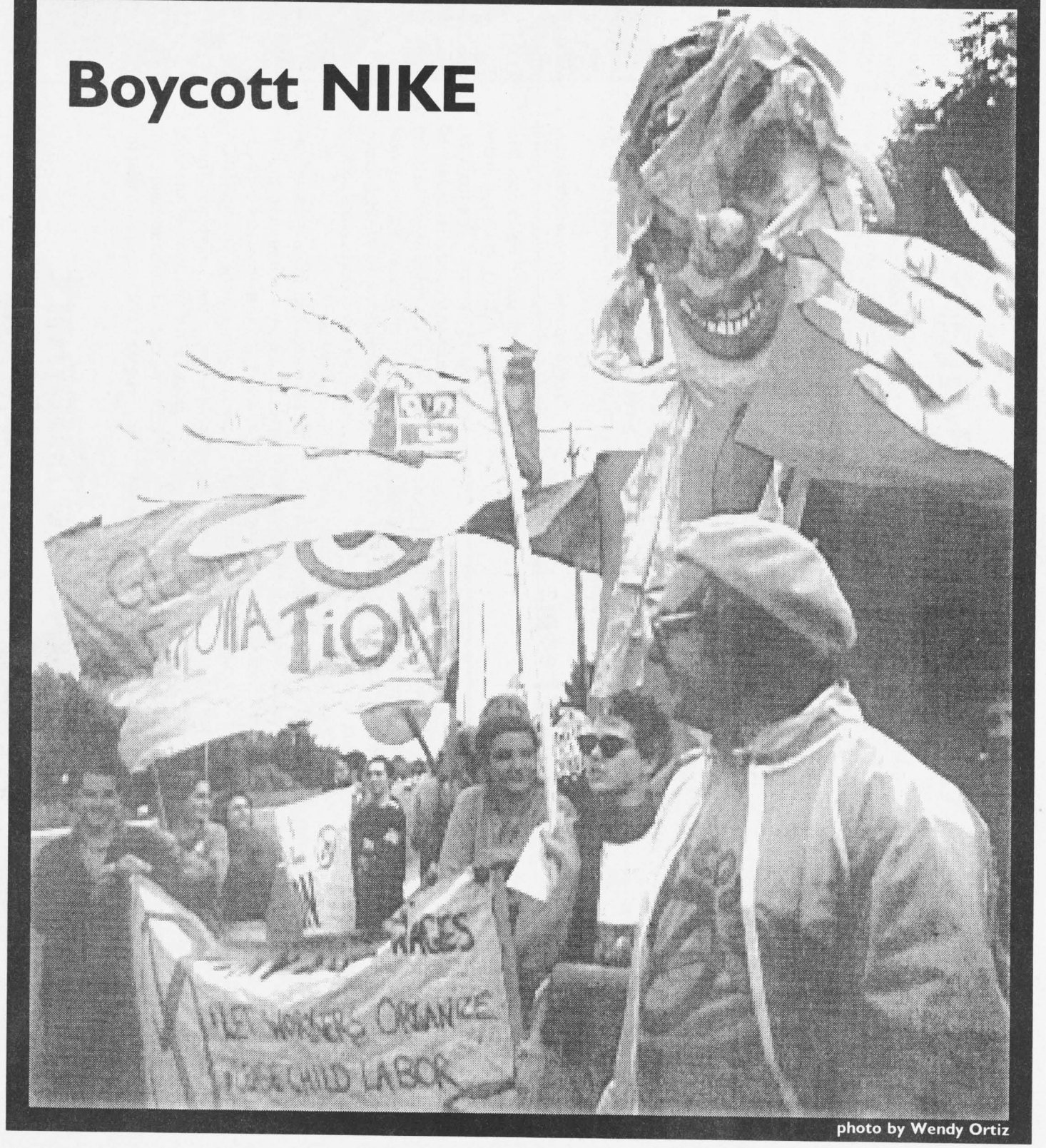

photo by Wendy Ortiz

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On Voting In November

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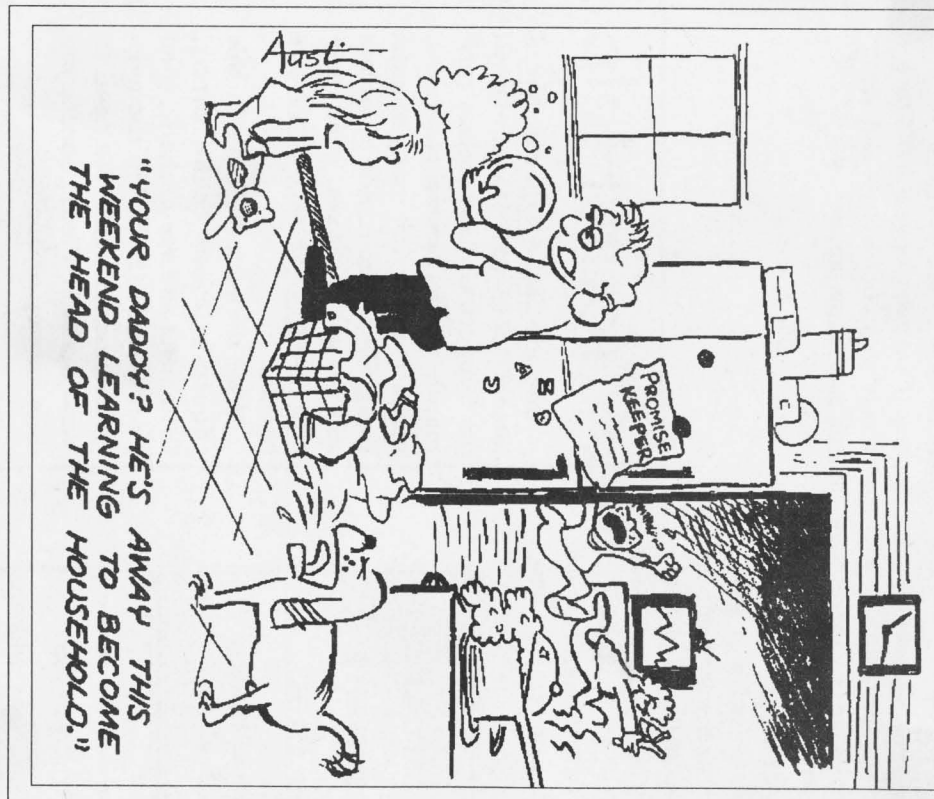
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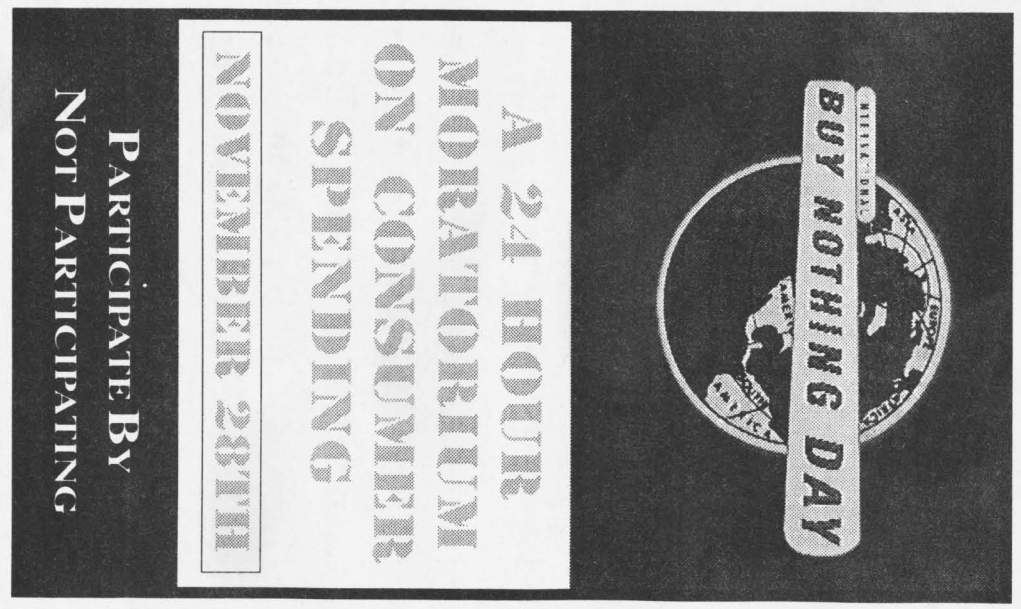

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